

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN

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formulas of Bible and creed. He could quicken them into rivalry with the youths whom the Roman Church was training by a similar though different process, for "the evangelization" of the Great Valley of our land. But when the scholars of Lane Seminary set up for a company of antislavery Protestants and champions, in vain did the professors set up their discipline. The Seminary halls were vacated, and the cage was emptied. Dr. Beecher had one son, whose bold speculations led him, though happily not past the reclaiming, into godless realms. There are thousands of our youth who are daring the same ventures now. But Calvinism will never bring them back.

After a period of faithful and fruitful labor at the West, the venerable man, drawing reverence and love wherever he went, returned for a while to Boston, and thence removed to Brooklyn, where he died in his eighty-eighth year.

ART. III.—JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

Poems by James Clarence Mangan. With a Biographical Introduction, by JOHN MITCHELL. New York: P. M. Haverty. 1859.

THE volume which gives the subject to this article is one of the saddest in the history of literature, which it was ever our fortune to meet, even among the dark pages of the lives of those "who learn in suffering."

We shall first give a brief sketch of the life of the unhappy being called James Clarence Mangan, and afterward offer a few remarks with specimens of his poems. The only record, except a very brief notice in Daly's "Poets and Poetry of Munster," which we find, is the sketch in the volume before us, where the illustrious exile, now in Fortress Monroe, expatiates upon his own wrongs and the tyranny of the Saxon oppressor, in the style of which we had such choice specimens, for the last four years, in the columns of the "Richmond

The Bible is not the book which Calvinism represents it to be, and once heartily believed it to be. The way of dealing with the Bible, which would draw Calvinism and authenticate Calvinism from it and by it, is now known not to be the honest or intelligent way of dealing with it. The phenomena of infancy, and of the first developments of character in Christian households, were the severest perplexities under which Dr. Beecher attempted a re-adjustment of the tenets of the system which he accepted. He did not venture upon the broader fields of the philosophy of human nature, even to the extent to which his daughter has, with an able pen, traversed some of them. Dr. Chalmers set himself with much of his zeal, and with all his rhetoric, to attempt a reconciliation between the dogmas of Calvinism, and the inferences drawn from the revelations made by the telescope, of the multitude of worlds to be cared for by God, and of the multitude of souls upon them—if they are inhabited by intelligent beings who have sinned—to be reconciled in the one only way,—by the offer of an infinite sacrifice. But the extent and character and other phenomena of population of this single globe offer facts and raise questions which utterly confound Calvinism. Calvinism evidently never contemplated the actual phenomena of what it called Heathenism. It was wrought out and formulized under wholly different views and aspects of things human and divine, than are now most positively certified to the average intelligence of our time.

Dr. Beecher seems to have been wholly oblivious, or even happily unconscious, of all the results of the sub-soil ploughing which has penetrated far beneath the surface-fields which he tilled, hoping to get from them their old crops. Not a single intimation do we gather from all his writings of any apprehension on his part of the real drift of the age which presented unmistakable tokens of itself all around him. He could take the crude material offered to him in the piously inclined young men to whom the zeal and charity of the East had opened a Theological Seminary in the West, with free maintenance and education; and he, with his colleagues, could train them by the literalisms of the old, unquestioned

Enquirer." Unfortunately, Mangan, a dreamer of dreams, had altogether too little knowledge of the world to penetrate the bombast and futility of the schemes of the young Irelanders; and, without doubt, his regard for Mitchell was only as the noisiest and most prominent seemed to his dimmed eyes the greatest. His letter to Mitchell, when the latter was under prosecution, was honorable to his feelings, if not to his discernment; and we must remember, that many others were under the same generous delusion at the time.

James Clarence Mangan was born in 1803, in an obscure hamlet called Shanagolden, in Limerick County, Ireland. Of his parents, it is only known, that his father, James Mangan, was a grocer, unfortunate in business; and that he died while his son was yet young. His mother, whose maiden name was Catherine Smith, removed, after the death of her husband, to the place of her nativity, Dublin, and lived in what would here be called abject poverty, but which the "deeper deep" of utter destitution and starvation of Irish poverty leaves several degrees higher in the scale of society. Of the early life of Mangan, no tangible record remains, save that he attended school, for a short time, in an obscure alley of Dublin, known as Derby Square; and that, for seven years or more, he was a copying clerk in a scrivener's office, earning just shillings enough to support the mother and sister dependent on him. The office, or the name of his master, is not known; but he ever after, when mentioning the life he then led, expressed the utmost sense of loathing and detestation, which his gentle nature would allow. After he left the scrivener's office, there is a gap of several years in the record of his life, in which it is not known how he lived and fared. The story is, that by some chance, and the privilege of his acquirements, — when or how got, with his means and his life, is beyond conjecture, — he was admitted to the society of a family far above him in wealth and station, in which there were three highly accomplished and beautiful sisters: with one of these, Frances —, encouraged or not, he had the presumption to fall in love. By the rude shock by which his tender spirit was awakened from his dream, his whole soul

was unhinged. He fled to opium and whiskey for relief, and, as we have said, for several years hid himself from the eyes of all his friends. During this time, it is not probable that he was absent from Dublin. Indeed, it may be doubted, whether he ever saw more of a mountain than the Wicklow Hills, or knew the features of his native land, save in the pictures of Maclise. During all this time, he was sunk in helpless debauchery and degradation, in the lowest slums of Dublin, in the companionship of the vilest of the human species. Scarcely a sentient or responsible being, he was as isolated from humanity, as if on a desert island. Like that soul which,

“Inwraught tenfold in slothful shame,
Lay there exiled from eternal God,
Lost to her place and name,”

the history of literature records no sadder fall or more innocent degradation. When he re-appeared, he was twenty-seven years of age, and as old in appearance as if forty. The clear blue eyes, and features of peculiar delicacy, which had distinguished his youth, remained; but his countenance was pallid and worn, like that of a corpse, and his hair prematurely white, presenting almost a bleached appearance.

At this time he commenced his connection with literature, by contributing short pieces, chiefly translations from the German and Irish, to an obscure magazine in Dublin. His compensation was hardly sufficient to supply his daily allowance of opium; but his pieces, by their peculiar qualities, attracted the attention of several literary men in Dublin, among them Dr. Anster, author of “*Xeniola*,” and one of the innumerable translations of “*Faust*,” Petrie and Dr. Todd, librarian of Trinity College. He was sought out, and by their aid employment was found for him, in the preparation of a new catalogue for the magnificent library of the College. He was thus enabled to procure a comfortable subsistence for his mother and sister, and opium for himself. The following sketch of his personal appearance at that time is given by his biographer:—

“Being in the College Library, and having occasion for a book in that gloomy apartment known as the ‘Fagel Library,’ which is in the innermost recess of the stately building, an acquaintance pointed out to me a figure perched on the top of a ladder, with the whispered information that the figure was Clarence Mangan. It was an unearthly and ghostly figure, in a brown garment, — the same garment, to all appearance, that lasted till the day of his death. The blanched hair was totally unkempt, the corpse-like features still as marble; a large book was in his arms, and all his soul was in the book. I had never heard of Clarence Mangan before, and knew not for what he was celebrated, whether as a magician, a poet, or a murderer; yet took a volume and spread it on a table, not to read, but with pretence of reading, to gaze on the spectral creature upon the ladder.”

The story of the remaining years of his life may be briefly told. He contributed to various magazines, including the “Dublin University,” poems and translations, giving as the latter some of his own grotesque yet beautiful utterances. His contributions also occasionally appeared in the columns of the “Nation,” — although his personal connection with the members of the Young-Ireland party was of the smallest, — where they shine like arabesque silver ornaments on the broad, green fustian banner of the “Regenerators.” He had but one whom he called friend, Joseph Brennan, to whom he addressed one of his most touching poems, and who, shortly after the death of Mangan, removed to this country, settled in New Orleans, where he became an editor of the “New Orleans Delta,” and died less than six years ago. Dr. Anster, Petrie, and others, endeavored to no purpose to reclaim Mangan, or establish some personal intercourse with him. He had become the slave of opium, and at times would disappear for weeks, avoiding all decent society, and holding drunken orgies in the lowest pothouses, in the company of beggars and ragamuffins, being occasionally found senseless in the gutters, and carried to the station-house. His appearance, after emerging from these sloughs of periodical debauch, was more like a ghost than a human being. At last the end came. After he had been missing for some time, word was brought to his friends, that he was lying ill in an obscure house in Bride Street.

He was removed, at his own request, to the Meath Hospital, where, after lingering seven days, he died, June 13th, 1849. At his last hour, he received the consolations of the Catholic religion, although he had not for a long time had any practical relations with that Church.

Such is the brief record of the life of one who most assuredly was in the world, but not of it. He hardly seems like a human creature, so weird, forlorn, and miserable is the whole story of his existence. It is doubtful whether he was ever raised to the height of which stronger natures are capable, even in the factitious heaven of opium, or was more than enveloped in a sort of Elfin land, where it is not day, but merely absence of night. His soul appears to have been without the knowledge of gladness, as flowers are white that have grown up in a cellar without sunlight.

With a person and mind so constituted, it would, of course, be in vain to look for any reflection or portraiture of national life or character in the volume before us. Mangan was in no sense, save birth, an Irish poet. The Burns, the Beranger, the Whittier of Ireland, is yet to appear. Perhaps the nearest approach at present is Mr. William Allingham, who is almost the only one that has appreciated the deficiency, or attempted faithfully to represent the character and scenery of Ireland in Irish idiomatic poetry. Beyond a doubt, "Lovely Mary Donnelly" and "The Girl's Lamentation" are two of the finest lyrics of modern times. They are full of local coloring and national idioms; in fact, are almost cantos of the old ballads, "Shule Aroon," and the like. But these are but the beginning of a promise, which we hope Mr. Allingham may live to fulfil, to rehabilitate and vivify with new life the fast-vanishing minstrelsy of his native country; to gather, polish, and string together the pearls into a chaplet that shall adorn the fame which his own original genius has already won. He may be proud to know, that his songs are printed on the half-penny broadsheet, and sold and sung all over his country. Thomas Davis, had he lived, and got cured of his "regeneration," would probably have ripened and sweetened into a truly national poet. As it is,—although his

poems contain here and there a scattered "wood-note wild," amid the rumble and blaze and noise,—he died too soon to be entitled to an enduring fame as an Irish poet. Gerald Griffin's verses, though sweet and tender, are at best feeble, and too much tainted with the "Keepsake" and "Annual" style to reach the heart of the Irish peasant. John Banim has left one poem, "Soggarth Aroon," which would alone be sufficient to stamp his name as one of the most forcible delineators of Irish life: it is full of power and pathos; a literal transcript of truth in the vividest and most idiomatic words. His other poems are much inferior. Samuel Ferguson, author of that noble ballad, "The Forging of the Anchor," which made such a sensation years ago, and seemed to give announcement of a new poet, has been content to be merely a lawyer, and indulge in literature only as a recreation. He is by far the best translator of the ancient Irish poetry. His poems have been collected recently, for the first time,* although in over-fastidiousness he has excluded many; and we can sincerely recommend their perusal to all lovers of poetry, or students of Irish character. Lover and Lever are not to be named as Irish poets. Moore is also out of the question. Aubrey De Vere is cold and rhetorical. Neither are any of the younger fry of the young Irelanders worth naming, although there is occasionally a piece worthy of preservation, amid the rant and fustian about the "sunburst" and "phoenix," and other strange cattle. In respect to the preservation of her ancient ballads and poetry, as in many another, Ireland has been singularly unfortunate: with airs of the most wild and plaintive beauty, equal, and in many respects superior, to those of Scotland,—every one of which undoubtedly had words attached,—there is very little remaining save the music, which can now never be lost. The poetry, which was handed down from mouth to mouth, has almost entirely perished, with the extinction of Erse as a dialect, almost in our own day. The few scattered fragments that have been pre-

* *Lays of the Western Gael, and other Poems.* By Samuel Ferguson. Bell & Daldy, London. 1865.

served, even in the clumsy translation that most of them have received, show what a treasure has been irrecoverably lost.

Mangan translated a number of pieces from the Erse, probably because they were better suited to the demands of the Irish market at that time than the German, but without any of heartiness or feeling necessary: singular to say, he did not even understand the language that he ventured to transcribe, being furnished with a literal prose translation of the words, by a friendly co-laborer in the library. Mangan's translations, although they reflect almost literally the intensely realistic expressions and allegorical repetitions of the originals, are almost entirely destitute of their sweetness and tender pathos, which Ferguson so clearly reproduces: they are too much like the literal versifying of a schoolboy's task, as thus in the old tale of "The Forgotten Wedding Day," or "Rory and Darborgilla:" —

"Know ye the tale of the Prince of Oriel,
Of Rory last of his line of Kings?
I pen it here as a sad memorial
Of how much woe reckless folly brings."

But hear ye further! When Cairtre's daughter
Saw what a fate had o'ertaen her Brave,
Her eyes became as twin founts of water,
Her heart again as a darker grave."

This is scarcely an improvement on the literal prose translation. How differently Ferguson would have mellowed the sad sweetness of the original into his numbers may be seen in the "Lament of Deirdre for the Sons of Usnach." Or perhaps the best example of the difference in their styles might be "The Fair Hills of Ireland," which was translated by both.

But, passing by these as unworthy of the skill and taste of the translator, and the spirit of his subjects, we come to the translations of the German, which form the bulk of the volume. These again are very unequal, as was to have been expected from so much task-work; but among them are some of the finest gems of poetry, that seem to have almost received additional lustre from their setting in a new language. The

very measure and melody of Ludwig Tieck's "Herbstlied" are thus marvellously transferred:—

"A little bird flew through the dell;
And, where the failing sunbeams fell,
He warbled thus his wondrous lay:
'Adieu! adieu! I go away:
Far, far
Must I voyage ere the twilight star.'

It pierced me through, the song he sang,
With many a sweet and bitter pang:
For wounding joy, delicious pain,
My bosom swelled and sank again.

Heart! heart!
Is it drunk with bliss or woe thou art?

Then, when I saw the drifted leaves,
I said, 'Already Autumn grieves.'
To sunnier skies the swallow hies:
So Love departs and Longing flies,
Far, far
Where the Radiant and the Beauteous are.

But soon the sun shone out anew,
And back the little flutterer flew:
He saw my grief, he saw my tears,
And sang, 'Love knows no Winter years.'

No! no!
While it lives, its breath is Summer's glow!"

The translations include specimens from the whole range of modern German poetry, with one exception and a singular one,—that of Heine, none of whose poems appear: yet it would seem, that the melancholy madness, and despairing, bitter mirth of his lyrical drops of gall, would have been in perfect unison with the spirit of Mangan. Perhaps their highly concentrated essence and perfect finish deterred, or their edges, too sharp for his own heart, forbade them to be meddled with in the way of task-work. Not only do we find here the higher names in German poetry, but some that do not rank above the common herd in their own country; as, for instance, many of "raw-head-and-bloody-bones" sentimentalities of the once popular Swabian school of minor poetry,—Dr. Justinus Kerner and the like, representing the "Mysteries of

Udolpho" and "Castle Spectre" school of English literature. These, in many instances, are so transfigured and beautified, that the original authors would find it difficult to recognize their offspring. In fact, Mangan by no means considered himself bound to give a literal version in cases like these, often changing the whole structure, melody, and purport of his subject; so that little remained save the title, or interpolating his own fancies, when and where he pleased: this, which would be sacrilege in the case of Goethe and Schiller, is easily pardoned as regards the works of authors that have been justly consigned to almost total oblivion. The following little gem, from Kerner, deserves the credit of an original poem:—

THE POET'S CONSOLATION.

"What though no maiden's tears ever be shed
O'er my clay bed,
Yet will the generous Night never refuse
To weep its dews.

And though no friendly hand garland the cross
Above my moss,
Still will the dear, dear moon tenderly shine
Down on that sign.

And if the saunterer by songlessly pass
Through the long grass,
There will the noontide bee pleasantly hum,
And the warm winds come.

Yes — you at least, ye dells, meadows, and streams,
Stars and moonbeams,
Will think on him whose weak, meritless lays
Teemed with your praise."

That he understood the true value of such maudlin sentimentalists may be seen by an extract from one of his own poems, to which it is time we now turned:—

"Did I paint a fifth of what I feel,
Oh, how plaintive you would ween I was!
But I won't, albeit I have a deal
More to wail about than Kerner has!

Kerner's tears are wept for withered flowers,
 Mine for withered hopes : my scroll of woe
 Dates, alas ! from youth's deserted bowers
 Twenty golden years ago !

Yet may Deutschland's bardlings flourish long !
 Me, I tweak no beak among them ; hawks
 Must not pounce on hawks : besides in song
 I could once beat all of them by chalks.
 Though you find me, as I near my goal,
 Sentimentalizing like Rousseau,
 Oh, I had a grand Byronian soul
 Twenty golden years ago !

Tick-tick, tick-tick ! — not a sound save Time's,
 And the wind-gust as it drives the rain :
Tortured torturer of reluctant rhymes,
 Go to bed, and rest thy aching brain !
 Sleep no more the dupe of hope and schemes ;
 Soon thou sleepest where the thistles blow :
 Curious anticlimax to thy dreams
 Twenty golden years ago."

The translations included in the volume under the head of Persian, Ottoman, Coptic, are undoubtedly his own. On one occasion, being asked how he could credit such gems to Hafiz, replied that Hafiz paid better than Mangan, and that any one could see that they were only *half his*. His professedly original poems are very few in number, comprising less than thirty pages of this volume ; but in them he poured out his soul as man has seldom done, and on them must his claim to be considered a poet rest. It must not be forgotten in the contemplation of these, that the man was a wreck, body and mind, a once stout-built argosy, but utterly and hopelessly wrecked ; that he pursued poetry, — translating we mean, — which gave him command of rhyme, only as a means of bread. These are not the theatrical *morbidezza* of a Byron or a Poe, but, like the lamentations of the lonely Job, only the irrepressible moans of his own soul. He reports the horrors and visions that lie in the world of his experience of sorrow, with a realistic intenseness of expression that Browning could alone rival, with a wonderful skill of melody, and capricious variety of rhyme, peculiar to himself, and occasionally flashing into an expression of living fire, as of the hypocrites, who —

“ Would look in God’s face
With a lie in their eyes.”

A specimen, by no means the best, but characteristic in every point, will give a better idea of the qualities of his poetry than the most labored analysis, and also serve as an autobiography of the life, which we have endeavored to sketch. It is entitled “The Nameless One;” and with it we shall close our brief record.

“ Roll forth, my song, like the rolling river
That sweeps along to the mighty sea :
God will inspire me while I deliver
My soul of thee !

Tell thou the world, when my bones lie whitening
Amid the last homes of youth and eld,
That there was one once, whose veins ran lightning
No eye beheld.

Tell how his boyhood was one drear night-hour ;
How shone for him, through his griefs and gloom,
No star of all, Heaven sends to light our
Path to the tomb.

Roll on, my song ; and to after-ages
Tell how, disdaining all earth can give,
He would have taught men, from Wisdom’s pages,
The way to live.

And tell how, trampled, derided, hated,
And worn by weakness, disease, and wrong,
He fled for shelter to God, who mated
His soul with song :

With song which alway, sublime or vapid,
Flowed like a rill in the morning beam ;
Perchance not deep, but intense and rapid, —
A mountain stream.

Tell how this Nameless, condemned for years long
To herd with demons from hell beneath,
Saw things that made him, with groans and tears, long
For even death.

Go on to tell how, with genius wasted,
Betrayed in friendship, befooled in love,
With spirit shipwrecked, and young hopes blasted,
He still, still strove ;

Till, spent with toil, dreeing death for others,
And some whose hands should have wrought for him
(If children live not for sires and mothers),
His mind grew dim.

And he fell far through that pit abysmal,
The gulf and grave of Maguire and Burns,
And pawned his soul for the devil's dismal
Stock of returns :

And yet redeemed it in days of darkness,
And shapes and signs of the final wrath ;
When Death, in hideous and ghastly starkness,
Stood on his path.

And tell how now, amid reck and sorrow
And want and sickness and houseless nights,
He bides in calmness the silent morrow,
That no ray lights.

And lives he still then ? Yes ! Old and hoary
At thirty-nine, from despair and woe,
He lives, enduring what future story
Will never know.

Him grant a grave to, ye pitying noble,
Deep in your bosoms ! There let him dwell !
He, too, had tears for all souls in trouble,
Here and in hell."

ART. IV. — RADICALISM AND CONSERVATISM.

*An Address to the Graduating Class at the Cambridge Divinity School,
delivered July 17, 1865. By ORVILLE DEWEY, D.D.*

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." — 1 THESS. v. 21.

RADICALISM and Conservatism: these topics are sufficiently indicated by the text, and they will be the subject of my discourse this evening.

"Prove all things." That is, analyze, assay them, as men do coin, to see whether it is pure gold. In other words, search all things; go to the bottom, to the roots, of things; go down to first principles; go to the foundations of truth: do not take things upon trust; do not accept what is propounded to you, whether from pulpit or professor's chair, simply because it is propounded: but understand, know, prove things to be true for yourselves: that is Radicalism. But, having reached

the best conclusion you can, having found what is good, keep, conserve, hold fast to it; keep an unswerving loyalty to it, — to the sovereignty of your convictions, to the right principle, in conduct, to the good law in society; hold on to it with a firm hand: that is Conservatism.

This distinction marks two characters or tendencies of mind; and, I think, of all minds. The one inquires, the other accepts. The one says, Why? Why this dogma, custom, law, institution, method of education, method of religious culture? It is not enough that it finds things taught, enjoined, ordained: it goes behind all that, and asks for the reasons and grounds of them. The other takes things as it finds them, and thinks of nothing but using and supporting them. The same difference may be seen in children: the parent knows it. Some are always asking questions, asking for reasons. They say, Why is this, or that? why must I do, or not do, this or that? I think it is natural to all children's minds to do so, though in some it is more marked than in others. But, if the disposition is repelled, the want unsatisfied; if, to the perpetual "Why?" the answer is, "Because it is so," or, "Because you must," then you are likely soon to have before you a conservative little child, — not the most promising form of character for the future. And yet, I think it is the character of most men.

But in speaking of grown-up men, in speaking of sects and parties, it would be unfair to apply the words "Radical" and "Conservative," in the extreme sense. This is often done, because men's opponents describe and denominate them, — not they themselves. It is singular, that the word "Radical," which, according to etymology, ought to mean simply going down to the roots of things, and therefore the most deep-founded principle, has come to mean the tearing-up of things by the roots. And because it is thus, the Conservative represents his opponent as a rash, reckless, unscrupulous innovator. On the other hand, the Radical retorts by defining the Conservative as a timid, selfish, obstinate defender of every thing old and established, — the enemy of all progress. "Fanatic" and "fogy" are the terms they apply to one another. Now, if this is right on one side, it is right on the other. But both

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